COLLECTORS' CORNER #77 APRIL 2, 1976
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TERRARIUMS NATURE IN A JAR
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: AND NOW, COLLECTORS' CORNER...THE VOICE OF AMERICA SERIES OF PROGRAMS FOR LISTENERS WHO COLLECT THINGS -- WHETHER THEY BE STAMPS OR COINS, SNUFF BOTTLES OR OLD AUTOS, OR MERELY BALLS OF STRING. HERE IS --------- WITH THE STORY OF A COLLECTOR WHO USES MOSS AND ROCKS TO CREATE MINIATURIZED SCENES OF LUXURIANT BEAUTY UNDER GLASS.

NARR: JANE GILLESPIE SAYS BUILDING A TERRARIUM IS LIKE PAINTING WITH SOIL AND PLANTS -- A CREATIVE EXPERIENCE THAT CAN INCLUDE ANYTHING FROM A MINIATURE KANGAROO TO BROKEN HEADLIGHT GLASS.

TERRARIUMS ARE SMALL SPACES ENCLOSED BY GLASS FOR RAISING PLANTS AND ANIMALS. THEIR POPULARITY, ACCORDING TO MISSUS GILLESPIE, IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND. RECYCLING ITS OWN OXYGEN AND MOISTURE, THE TERRARIUM FUNCTIONS ALMOST AUTOMATICALLY, AND THE MERE GLIMPSE OF ONE ON A COFFEE TABLE OR AN OFFICE DESK CAN BRING BACK DELIGHTFUL MEMORIES OF A LUSH, WOODLAND PATH OR A WARM, SUNNY BEACH. THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS ENJOY NURTURING A PORTION OF NATURE IN A JAR.

MISSUS GILLESPIE BEGAN MAKING AND COLLECTING TERRARIUMS ABOUT TEN YEARS AGO, BEFORE THEY WERE REALLY POPULAR. WORKING IN THE BASEMENT OF HER WASHINGTON HOME, SHE WILL OFTEN TURN OUT TWO OR THREE TERRARIUMS A WEEK, AND HAS

NARR: (CONT) MADE OVER FIVE HUNDRED SINCE SHE BEGAN. SHE STARTED OUT WORKING WITH BOTTLES. USING LONG, THIN BAMBOO STAKES SHE WOULD PATIENTLY POKE AND PROBE, SLOWLY TRANSFORMING AN ASSORTMENT OF MOSS AND MINATURE PLANTS INTO A SCENE OF RICH, TROPICAL BEAUTY. HER FIRST MAJOR ADVANCE, SHE SAYS, WAS TALKING HER DENTIST OUT OF A PAIR OF TWEEZERS:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- GILLESPIE

"BUT WHEN I FOUND THAT I COULD MAKE THEM AND THEY WOULD GROW AND THRIVE AND LOOK NICE, IN WHAT HAS BECOME KNOWN AS A TERRARIUM JAR, WHICH WERE THEN CALLED APOTHECARY JARS, I SAID: WELL, WHY COULDN'T I MAKE SCENES OUT OF IT. AND I STARTED USING MOSS AND ROCKS AND LITTLE FIGURES... THEY'RE LOVELY LITTLE BOATS AND DEER AND THINGS. AND STARTED TRYING TO DEPICT AN ACTUAL SCENE IN MINIATURE. AND THEY LOOKED ATTRACTIVE, AND I JUST DEVELOPED IT SINCE THEN."

NARR: ONE OF HER FAVORITE DESIGNS IS THE SNOW SCENE -- A SMALL MASS OF MOISTENED SAND AND ROCKS SHAPED LIKE A MOUNTAIN SIDE AND COVERED WITH TINY SEEDLING PINES. BRIGHT, WHITE SAND DEPICTS THE SNOW. AND COLORFUL PLASTIC SKIERS NO BIGGER THAN A THUMBNAIL WIND THEIR WAY DOWN TRAILS CRISS-CROSSING THROUGH THE PINES AND ROCKS. MISSUS GILLESPIE ALSO DESIGNS BEACH SCENES THAT CONSIST OF SAND, MINIATURE PALM TREES, AND LITTLE SEA SHELLS -- ALL BORDERING ON A SPARKLING SEA OF BROKEN HEADLIGHT GLASS. SHE SAYS THE SMOOTH, SHINY GLASS IS PRETTIER THAN REAL WATER, AND EASIER TO WORK WITH.

MOST OF HER MINIATURE SHRUBS AND PLANTS, SOME OF THEM GROWING NO MORE THAN AN INCH TALL, CAN BE PURCHASED AT ANY FLORIST OR GARDEN CENTER. HER TERRARIUMS OFTEN

NARR: (CONT) CONTAIN AN ABUNDANCE OF FERNS, AND FOR CONTRAST ONE MIGHT FIND LITTLE RED AND YELLOW POSIES, PINK STARFLOWERS, AND THE BRILLIANT RED FOLIAGE OF THE BLOODLEAF.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- GILLESPIE

"BUT IF SOMEBODY WANTS TO START ONE, START WITH A COVERED GLASS CONTAINER, GET A CANISTER YOU WOULD BUY TO PUT YOUR MACARONI OR SPICES IN THE KITCHEN, OR ANY BOWL WITH A LID. WASH IT THOROUGHLY, MAKE SURE ITS SCRUPULOUSLY CLEAN DRIED. THE ESSENTIAL THINGS ARE THE GRAVEL BASE FOR DRAINAGE, CHARCOAL TO KEEP THE SOIL SWEET, AND PLANTS THAT ARE GUARANTEED NOT TO GROW TOO FAST SO YOU CAN KEEP FROM TRIMMING THEM ALL THE TIME."

NARR: MISSUS GILLESPIE SAYS ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS SHE ENJOYS WORKING WITH TERRARIUMS SO MUCH IS THAT IT HELPS HER TO RELAX. AND BESIDES, SHE SAYS, EVERYONE LOVES DIRT:

TAPE: CUT THREE -- GILLESPIE

"NO MATTER HOW OLD YOU GET YOU STILL HAVE MUD PIES IN YOUR BLOOD, I THINK. AND YOU SIT DOWN AND YOU CAN DO SOMETHING WITH YOUR HANDS AND SEE IT SLOWLY GROW INTO SOMETHING YOU CAN SEE IN YOUR MIND, ITS THE MOST RELAXING THING I KNOW OF."

ANNCR: THIS HAS BEEN COLLECTOR'S CORNER...NOTES ON THE WORLD OF COLLECTORS WHO BUY AND SELL AND, ABOVE ALL, CHERISH THINGS FROM STAMPS TO ... TERRARIUMS. NEXT WEEK (AT THIS TIME) ANOTHER LOOK AT INTO THE COLLECTORS CORNER. THIS IS ----------.

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